



## **MDCR/MCRC E-newsletter for July 31, 2015**

### [Taking of black lives leads some to fear good cops](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/30

There was a time when I wasn't afraid of police officers.

### [CMU assistant professor sues university, alleges discrimination](#)

From MLive, 7/30

MOUNT PLEASANT — An assistant professor of journalism at Central Michigan University has filed a lawsuit against the university. She alleges her civil rights were violated because of her sex and/or pregnancy.

### [Why Hope College bucks trend, offers spousal benefits to gay employees](#)

From MLive, 7/29

HOLLAND — When the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Michigan's same-sex marriage ban, Hope College took a step that other Christian schools in the region had opted against by offering spousal benefits to gay employees.

### [Saginaw County settles 2 lawsuits filed by women against sheriff, county](#)

From MLive, 7/29

SAGINAW – Saginaw County and Sheriff William Federspiel have settled two lawsuits filed by past and current female employees of the sheriff's department, according to court records.

### [Builder sues Oakland Township over elder housing denial](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/29

Pontiac — A prominent developer and an ex-township official are suing Oakland Township for alleged discriminatory zoning practices against the elderly, the disabled and those of low to moderate income.

### [Canton goes after online bullying, harassment](#)

From WDIV, 7/29

Canton Township – It's no longer harassing letters and constant hang-up phone calls, it's online harassment on multiple social media platforms. Log in any day on Facebook or Twitter and you're bound to see bad behavior, but it crosses over into police territory when it's threatening, pornographic or publically humiliating—constantly.

### [State sentencing guidelines ruled unconstitutional](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/29

LANSING – In a decision that could have a far-reaching impact on current and future cases going through the court system, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that the state's sentencing guidelines that mandate prison terms are unconstitutional, and that judges should use them only in an advisory capacity.

### [The Shooting of Samuel Dubose](#)

From the New York Times, 7/29

Samuel Dubose was a 43-year-old unarmed black man who was shot in the head and killed by a University of Cincinnati police officer, Ray Tensing, during a traffic stop a few blocks from campus.

### [The Challenges That Remain After Marriage Equality](#)

From the New York Times, 7/29

It's tempting to regard last month's Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage as the coda of the gay rights movement. The joyous celebrations it prompted around the nation had an air of finality for the broader effort set in motion decades ago by the trailblazers who demanded to be treated with dignity.

### [United Methodist LGBT advocates tape pledge to doors after ousting of gay minister](#)

From MLive, 7/28

LANSING – United Methodist pastors from different parts of the state Tuesday traded in the pulpit for a press conference podium and a pledge to support the Rev. Benjamin Hutchison, an openly gay pastor who said he was forced to resign because he has a husband.

### [A look at ADA's lasting impact in metro Detroit](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/28

Twenty-five years ago, America took a bold leap toward becoming a more perfect union when we rejected the old prejudices that restricted people with disabilities to institutions, isolation and exclusion from American life. In enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, our nation embraced the idea that all Americans should be able to participate fully in our society.

### [Alford: Black livelihoods — not just lives — matter](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/28

If there has been anything positive to come out of a string of recent cases involving African-Americans subjected to abuse by law enforcement authorities, it is that more and more Americans now acknowledge there is a systemic problem with the interplay between minorities and police officers. They acknowledge that something must be done.

### [Facebook post of police officer mowing lawn for man in wheelchair gaining attention](#)

From MLive, 7/28

KALAMAZOO – Photos posted to the "Downtown Kalamazoo Cops" Facebook page of two police officers in an act of kindness are getting a lot of attention.

### [Judge sets hearing on Michigan's \\$1.9 million gay marriage legal bill](#)

From MLive, 7/27

DETROIT – U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman on Monday set a Sept. 30 hearing on how much the state will have to pay lawyers who represented the Hazel Park lesbian couple who successfully sued for the right to marry.

### [Feds urge metro Detroit faith leaders to beef up security](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/27

In the wake of a horrific shooting that killed nine black parishioners at a South Carolina church last month, federal and local authorities urged metro Detroit faith leaders at a summit Monday to become more vigilant and improve security at their houses of worship.

### [3 takeaways from community-police relations forum in Muskegon Heights](#)

From MLive, 7/27

Muskegon Heights residents and Muskegon Heights Police made strides toward better relations on Monday with a Michigan State Police-hosted public safety forum.

### [Report recommends erasing parts of Mich. Constitution](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/26

Lansing — The Michigan Constitution says voters must be at least 21-years-old and that only heterosexual couples can marry. It also sets term limits for the state's members of Congress.

### [Rights panel backs effort to challenge anti-Arab bias](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/26

Grand Rapids — The Michigan Civil Rights Commission is backing a national campaign to challenge discrimination against U.S. Arabs and Muslims.

### [Americans with Disabilities Act hits 25-year milestone](#)

From MLive, 7/26

NEW YORK — Five days before he was to start college, Fred Maahs' world turned upside down. Off the Delaware coast in 1980, on the last day of summer vacation, the 18-year-old took a dive from his family's boat into an unseen sandbar barely a foot below the surface, suffering injuries that paralyzed him from the chest down.

### [Married gay couples need guidance from Social Security Administration, says Michigan congressman](#)

From MLive, 7/25

Same-sex couples whose marriages were previously unrecognized can now review their relationships with government programs, and a Michigan congressman wants them to be aware of new rights and opportunities.

### [MSP says big steps in diversity should start next year](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/24

LANSING — The Michigan State Police has stepped up its efforts to recruit blacks, other racial minorities and women as troopers and the results of that effort should be evident when the MSP next graduates a school of recruits in 2016, an official tasked with improving the diversity of the department said Friday.

### [SVSU adds gender identity to its nondiscrimination policy](#)

From MLive, 7/24

KOCHVILLE TOWNSHIP, MI — Saginaw Valley State University officials have updated the institution's nondiscrimination policy to include gender identity and genetic information protections.

### [Oak Park same-sex couple lobby Congress for rights](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/23

Detroit — A Metro area couple who says their pediatrician refused to see their daughter because they're lesbians is in Washington pushing to have sexual orientation added to the nation's civil rights bill.

### [America needs a justice system worthy of the name](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/23

The United States does not have a justice system.

### [How Grand Rapids wants to make LGBT, 'religious' language in city code more inclusive](#)

From MLive, 7/23

GRAND RAPIDS – Amid last winter's debate over body cameras, in the wake of Ferguson, Mo. unrest after a white police officer there fatally shot an unarmed black man, City Manager Greg Sundstrom promised a series of reforms. Among them: review the city's diversity and inclusion policies.

### [False expectations define the racism in Bland video](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/23

I wouldn't have gotten out of the car, either.

### [University of Michigan settles disability bias lawsuit](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/23

Ann Arbor — The U.S. Department of Justice says it has settled a lawsuit against the University of Michigan that accused the school of failing to provide proper job reassignment to employees with disabilities.

### [Viewpoint: Landmark Advances In Nondiscrimination Employment, With Limitations](#)

From PrideSource/Between the Lines, 7/23

Last week was a very important step forward for nondiscrimination protections for LGBT people. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency assigned to investigate complaints of employment discrimination in violation of federal law, issued a decision that employment discrimination based on sexual orientation discrimination is a form of sex discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act. Back in 2012 the EEOC issued a similar ruling that transgender employment discrimination, based on gender identity or expression, is also a form of sex discrimination in violation of federal law. The basis for both of these decisions is that in each of these cases the discrimination was motivated by gender stereotyping, in other words the employer's perspective that the gay or transgender employee failed to conform to the employer's notions of gender conventions. In *Complainant v. Department of Transportation Safety*, a gay male alleged that he was not selected for a permanent position as Front Line Manager because he is gay. He also alleged that his supervisor made several negative comments to him about his sexual orientation, which included admonishing him for mentioning his partner with, "We don't need to hear about that gay stuff."

### [LGBT workers protected by federal ruling, but Michigan activists still pushing gay rights bill](#)

From MLive, 7/22

LANSING – A federal agency last week effectively banned employment discrimination against LGBT people at many businesses, but activists in Michigan say it is still important to expand the state's anti-discrimination law.

### [Protecting gay rights, not blocking them, is what Michigan wants](#)

From MLive, 7/22

By State Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr.

Like the overwhelming majority of Michigan residents who support marriage equality, I was thrilled with the Supreme Court's decision on same-sex marriage last month.

### [Couple's apartment vandalized with racial slurs: 'What did we do to anybody?'](#)

From MLive, 7/22

GRAND RAPIDS – A Grand Rapids couple says they don't feel safe in their downtown apartment after finding their window and mailbox vandalized with racial slurs.

### [Few human trafficking cases reported despite publicity, state police say](#)

From MLive, 7/22

LANSING, MI -- The Michigan State Police claim few cases of human trafficking were reported last year in Michigan despite widespread publicity from elected officials and new laws aimed to combat the issue.

### [Gay weddings prompt discussion, dissension in churches](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/20

After the Supreme Court's landmark decision upholding marriage equality in all 50 states, many churches are figuring out how — or even if — they will proceed with same-sex weddings.

### [Serbian hope to replicate Mich. program for the deaf](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/20

Novi — Kristina Djordjevic lifts her arms and belts out the lyrics to the Disney hit “Frozen,” known worldwide:

“Let it go, let it go....”

### [60 gay state workers insure spouses](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 7/20

LANSING – Gay and lesbian state employees whose spouses were previously relegated to “other adult” status have one week left this year to make their marriages official in the eyes of the Office of State Employer.

### [State employees await Supreme Court decisions](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 7/20

LANSING – With two weeks left in the Michigan Supreme Court's 2014-15 term, state government workers still are waiting for justices to decide major questions about the constitutional relationship between lawmakers and civil servants.

### [Levin introduces tax code rewrite for same sex marriage](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/16

Washington — The top ranking Democrat on the tax writing committee is introducing legislation Thursday to ensure tax laws are rewritten to provide for equal treatment for same-sex married couples.

### [EPA's Clean Power Plan will be costly for minority families](#)

From MLive, 7/16

With the Obama administration only a month away from releasing its so-called Clean Power Plan, much debate has focused on the supposed benefits of cutting U.S. greenhouse gas emissions over the next 15 years. Lost amid the rhetoric, however, is the economic hardship it will impose on millions of working families — especially the 1.7 million blacks and Hispanics living in Michigan.

### [For first time, black kids in poverty outnumber white](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/16

The number of black children living in poverty in the U.S. has surpassed the number of poor white children for the first time since U.S. Census has tracked such numbers in 1974, according to an analysis by the Pew Research Center.

#### [Bill introduced to prohibit Michigan 'sanctuary cities' for illegal immigrants](#)

From the Oakland Press, 7/15

LANSING — After a woman was reportedly killed by an illegal immigrant in California, an area legislator has introduced a state bill in Lansing that would prohibit local units of government from enacting or enforcing “sanctuary city” laws.

#### [Panel OKs African American commission](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 7/15

LANSING – A new Michigan African American Affairs Commission is one step closer to existence.

#### [Trailer park manager accused of hate crime against teen](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/15

CUTLERVILLE – The manager of a mobile home park in west Michigan is accused of putting a 14-year-old boy in a choke hold and using an anti-black slur against him.

#### [Group to let conversation guide action on racial equity](#)

From the Detroit News, 7/15

What is race? It's a single question that elicits hundreds, perhaps thousands, of answers and even more questions.

#### [Flint School District won't release special education records, lawsuit says](#)

From MLive, 7/14

FLINT – A nonprofit group that helps people with disabilities is suing the Flint School District in federal court, claiming the district is withholding information and records, preventing students from getting special education services.

#### [Report: Ypsilanti man suing Ford over firing after anti-homosexual comment](#)

From MLive, 7/14

The Ypsilanti man who filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Ford Motor Company alleging that he was fired for making anti-homosexual comments is now suing the automotive giant, according to a report by The Detroit Free Press.

#### [Education department to make website more accessible](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/13

The Michigan Department of Education has a mountainous task ahead of it to comply with a federal directive and make its website accessible to people with disabilities.

#### [A Bias More Than Skin Deep](#)

From the New York Times, 7/13

I will never forget the October 2013 feature on National Geographic's website:

There was a pair of portraits of olive-skinned, ruby-lipped boys, one with a mane of curly black hair, the other with the tendrils of blond curls falling into his face.

### [Symbols of racism cry out for revisiting, context](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/12

The Confederate Flag atop a monument in front of South Carolina's Capitol has come down, following weeks of impassioned debate in that state about history, symbols, race and how badly this country needs to come to terms with all three.

### [Father of Michael Brown Jr. addresses police-citizen tension while in Detroit](#)

From MLive, 7/12

The father of 18-year-old Michael Brown Jr., shot and killed by Ferguson, Mo. police on Aug. 9, 2014, spoke on a panel about police-community relations and violence Friday.

### [Dearborn Heights Police to allow Muslim women to wear hijab after arrests](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/10

Under pressure from a lawsuit, the City of Dearborn Heights has agreed to change its booking procedures to allow Muslim women who wear Islamic head scarves to keep them on during photos and to be searched by female officers without men present.

### [Dearborn cultural center hit with anti-Iraqi graffiti](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 7/9

A community center in Dearborn popular with the Arab-American community has been vandalized with graffiti painted in Arabic that's anti-Iraqi and appears to be aimed at a local Muslim leader of Iraqi descent recently forced out of a mosque, said Dearborn officials.

### [Finley: Tax exemption not at risk for churches](#)

From the DN, 7/9

Among the over-the-top reactions to last week's Supreme Court gay marriage ruling are predictions that religious institutions will lose their tax exempt status if they refuse to accommodate gay couples.

### [A metro Muslim wants to change your mind](#)

From the DFP, 7/7

This is the story of a Pakistani Muslim from Ann Arbor — a radiologist by trade, an average American by right, a regular Joe who doesn't always go to mosque with his wife and children — on a mission to redefine how people see Muslims: He is helping to rebuild a broken Detroit neighborhood near a black Muslim mosque.